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# THE MAYANS

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**VADE MECUM, VOLVENTIBUS ANNIS**

**THE MAYANS**  
**SAN ANTONIO,**  
**TEXAS**

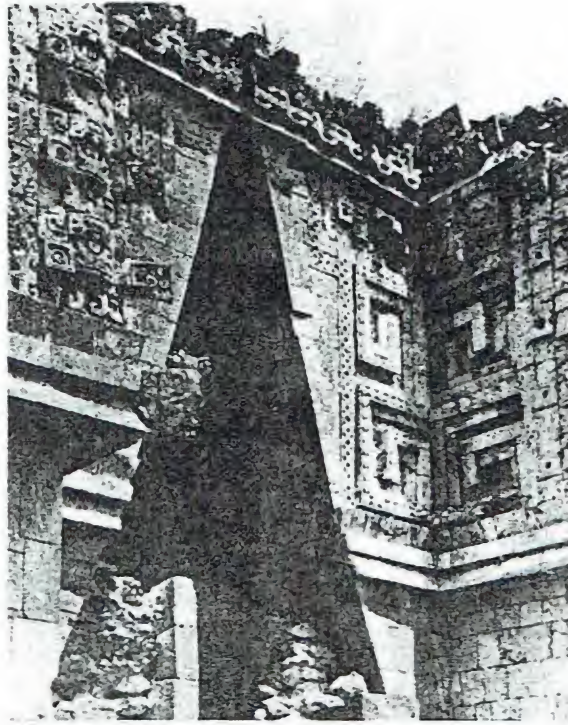
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*Photograph by Rose Dawn*

*The Archway to the House of the Governors  
(Yucatan)*

## DO IT YOURSELF

Mayan Lesson Number 156

IN THE BEGINNING

GOD IN EXPERIENCE

GOD IN LITERATURE

REALLY DISCOVERING GOD

GOD IN NATURE

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MEDITATION



Beloved Centurion:

While preparing this lesson for you, which is arranged to help in your endeavors to build a successful life, I am thinking of the success which the Mayans of old attained in their building of the beautiful temples, ruins of which are to be seen today in all of the countries where the ancient Maya lived.

The beauty of their work, with so little with which to build, is another example of the determination, the faith, and the talent which they employed in everything they did.

They were building beautiful temples which they used for worship. You are building a life.

The purpose of this series of lessons which we have called DO IT YOURSELF is to teach you that without God as your Partner, no real satisfaction can ever be attained. You may try to accomplish your aim without Him, but no department of your life will be complete if it lacks his loving care and guidance. It is the very deep and sincere desire of your instructor and your Mayan Order that you recognize this fact, and keep it uppermost in your heart and your mind.

As you go through every day, always keep in mind that when we say DO IT YOURSELF, we do not mean to exclude the Soul of the Universe from your activities - the Soul of the Universe, of course, being GOD. We mean, do not depend on others. The magnificent temples built by the ancient Mayans stand as mute testimony to the truth of this great principle. Their determination, faith, patience, and their belief that nothing is impossible, demonstrates the extent to which they utilized their God-given powers.

Look once more at the beautiful archway pictured on the cover of this lesson, which was made by the Mayans hundreds of years ago. Let your life be as perfect as this. Prepare yourself to pass through this beautiful archway to a life which can bring you peace, happiness and contentment of mind.

And now, let us know, as we repeat the following prayer, that we are passing through the archway to greater knowledge:

#### P R A Y E R

Prepare my soul, my Heavenly Father, to make the greatest quest of all, the quest for the Soul of the Universe, which is Thyself, and let my search be successful, satisfying, and redeeming. Amen.





LESSON NUMBER TWODISCOVER THE SOUL OF THE UNIVERSE

## IN THE BEGINNING

T H E R E is but one place to begin anything, and that is at the beginning. Let us start with the law of cause and effect, and consider it as a series of links. Take anything as it is today and consider it as an effect. The next link behind it is its cause, but it is also an effect caused by the next one behind it. Go back as far as you wish, and it is the same. The chain of cause and effect reaches all the way back to some kind of a beginning, and the first effect you come to had to have some kind of a cause, and we are bound to conclude that the first effect is the work of a First Cause.

A fine watch, a motor car, or a modern farm combine, or any such thing, had to have a maker. You would doubt the sanity of anyone who would say that one of these could have made itself or that it happened by chance. A rose, a planet, or a human being - these also are effects, and you cannot have effects without causes. No matter where you start, the chain leads you back to the necessity of that Soul of the Universe, First Cause. There has to be a beginning, and that is the only one that is adequate.

In the former lesson we were thinking of the intricate mystery of all we see and know, realizing that we can only explain it by assuming that it is something first existing as a thought in an Infinite Mind, which was then energized into visible and tangible existence by an Infinite Power. We have to face the matter of origins. There has to be a beginning, a First Cause.

That Being has been called by many names. Each age and people has had its way of calling upon Him. The language of the Hebrews is full of syllables suggesting one or the other of their favorite names - Jaweh and Elohim. We might properly use any one of the traditional names or one of our own, but most of us prefer to use the word Lord, or the word God. Whatever name we use, we must find the Soul of the Universe because it is both our only explanation and our only refuge.

Do not attempt to go forward and experience a larger life without God. Being pure spirit, He is not visible to the eye. He is seen only with a pure heart, so you must seek Him with your heart. If one expects a safe and successful pilgrimage through the world he must start at the beginning, and in the brief general outline of creation in the First Chapter of Genesis, the beginning is God. But you must really find Him for yourself.

## GOD IN LITERATURE

A T this point you might ask impatiently why we do not come at once to the matter of getting on instead of spending time on the preparatory phases. The reason is that one can get on only when he is ready, and there are things to consider and do before we are ready for this grand adventure. Haste could be a sure way of losing time.

In time we shall come to the lesson on getting started, but before that let us give a little thought to the approach. It is necessary to be ready, and a person who starts on a program of self-realization and development without a clear consciousness of the presence and help of God is not ready. So we are devoting this whole lesson to getting acquainted with the One without whom you can do nothing. We are here trying to build up step by step to the climax of really knowing God. Just now let us think of God in literature.

It is well if you have read at least the best of the world's great writings, which represent inspiration as far as the merely human often experiences it. It is well if you at least know something of the classics. Throughout the pages of the world's great literature you find constant references to God. Some are more understanding than others, but they all indicate that the writer can hardly escape the consciousness of God as he reaches into the heights and depths of thought for his materials. Nameless though it be to him, if he is writing sincerely he catches some kind of a consciousness of the Divine Presence. Some see a clear image and others a vague shadow, but the common agreement indicates that there is something there.

Now and then some young writer undertakes to go forward with no knowledge of the Scriptures or understanding of God, but he never gets far without realizing that he cannot work without them. It is much the same with a reader of literature too. He finds it so full of Biblical and religious allusions that there is no understanding of it without some knowledge of them, and when one does come to understand it, he finds that he has also gained considerable knowledge of them.

Know something, then, of the better writing of the past and present. It will suggest many insights into the nature and ways of the Divine. Like the Bible itself it will show you what came of some characters who walked with God and to some others who opposed God or tried to live their lives independent of Him. You will find many helps in interpreting religious truth and many influences of its application in life that will help show what your own application of it may lead to.

Some writers see the idea but bungle it in expression. If here and there you come to a mental window with unclear glass or a mirror that gives a distorted image, try to correct the lines in your own thinking. You will learn something, even from that.



GOD IN NATURE

LET us now turn to an even more universal revelation of God - that in Nature. There you are never absent from evidence of Him, for everything you see and much about it that you do not see is a product of his creation. You will be struck by the multitude of divine patterns there unfolded. More and more but never exhaustively you will be amazed at their ingenuity and beauty. Its supreme message to you will be the wonder that a Love and Power so great must also have a place for you in its attention and care.

Tennyson wrote that if one understood all about a flower in a cranny in a wall he would know the whole mystery of God and man. Addison, thinking of Nature's vaster manifestations, wrote:

"The spacious firmament on high,  
And all the blue, ethereal sky,  
And spangled heavens, a starry frame,  
Their great Original proclaim,  
Forever singing as they shine,  
'The hand that made us is divine'"

There you have it. All the way from a tiny flower to a mighty star the touch of God's hand is on everything.

To us our earth seems a very large thing, a few of the planets larger yet, and the sun larger indeed. Yet, comparatively speaking, our sun is one of the smaller stars. The star Betelgeuse is of such a size that if it were in the position of our sun its circumference would reach out almost to the orbit of the planet Mars, and the orbit of the earth would be about a quarter of a million miles inside of it. Yet the power of God called it into being and keeps it going. To Him it is not more of a problem than the flower in a crannied wall.

Near the three-star belt of the Constellation of Orion is a nebula which it takes light about twenty-five years to cross at the regular speed of light. This vast body of swirling gases has been called an atom factory. Like other nebulae in the sky, in it atoms are being willed into existence and combining into elements that may one day be a solar system.

There, through a telescope, or with the naked eye on a clear night, we may view a process like that briefly described in the first few verses of the Book of Genesis, the story of cosmic creation being re-enacted. Think of the kind of Being it takes to carry on that kind of work in the reaches of space and time. Realize that the Power that is doing this is the one of Whom it is said that He careth for you, the One of whom Whittier wrote, "I cannot drift beyond His love



and care."

This is something of what it means to look for God in Nature. You will not actually see God there, of course, but you will see His handiwork. Where there are footprints there has been a person, and where there is work there has been a workman. The more you do of this the wider and deeper you will see. The more you think of it the more wonderful it will seem that this Mighty One is also your personal Companion. This is possible for all of us at the same time, for Pure Spirit is everywhere, loving and powerful, so that in it we may all live, and move, and have our being. Attempt nothing important without that consciousness in your heart.

### GOD IN THE BIBLE

T H E Bible is, of course, a special revelation of the idea of God developing in the thought and conduct of the race. We see this going on through the centuries till the perfect revelation is reached in the life of the Christ. We have to know how to trace it, or we will lose track of it in the mass of events that can be understood only in the light of the times in which they occur.

If you read the record rightly you will see that idea growing with human understanding, showing man's relation to God and God's dealings with people of every kind and in every situation. To stop the search short of the end might mean never to understand the revelation in its entirety.

Without constant sessions with the open Bible there can be no really instructed mind, peaceful heart, or satisfying life. Many have not learned that, or having learned it do not act upon it. The price they pay is very great, for it is in terms of the values to which we have just been referring.

Without the conscious knowledge of God there can be no real richness and abundance of life, and without familiarity with the Bible there is not much chance of the conscious knowledge of God. Other books are supplementary reading; the Bible is the textbook. It was written by men who knew God, and in times that gave that knowledge its truest and fullest expression.

There are ways not to read the Bible. One is to read it just to find excuses for what you want to do. One is to search it for isolated texts to prove what you already believe, or think you believe, or want to believe. One is to take single passages out of context and try to apply them to things with which they have nothing to do, like trying to prove something true by the words of someone who is not even supposed to be speaking the truth.

The way to read the Bible is first to learn what is the historical setting of the part read, determine from it what is the viewpoint of the person writing or speaking, then read with an open mind and worshipful attitude. You will sometimes find real meanings quite different from what you had always assumed them to be, but then you will know more about it than you ever supposed you would. Each time you read a given part you will understand it better and more deeply.



Learning to understand the mystery of God as pure spirit was not easy for the sense-bound human mind to do, so the God life was incarnated in the human body of the Man Jesus so we might see it in human terms, and understand "the Word made flesh." Even so, we have to learn as we live, and work toward a stage of understanding to be discussed further a little later; but in any case the Bible is the textbook on which is based all we will learn in this life of God. Build up this understanding as you can, knowing that while others may help, you will have to do it yourself.

## GOD IN EXPERIENCE

WE now take a step beyond the study of the Bible, but one we would never have known how to take without what the Bible revealed to us. It is a level of the knowledge of God to which the Bible leads and for which it is the preparation. That level is experience.

We might read any number of good books on friendship, and think about it, and discuss it with others, without really having or being a friend, in other words without knowing it as an experience. The more true things we read or hear about God, the better prepared we are to know Him as an experience, but it does not necessarily follow that we will. The same could be true of love, or patriotism, or good conduct. It certainly is true in the matter of knowing God.

We have said that God is pure spirit, but we must realize that this pure spirit has in it all the elements of personality, making God an infinite Person. Being that, He is capable of being not only a Creator but also a Father and a Friend. That makes our personal relationship with Him one of sonship, and sonship at its best is also friendship. These things are experiences, and not cold facts or elusive theories. God is not merely something we know about by having heard or read His name. His goodness is something we know by having had it happen to us.

That is the understanding of God you need to attain in order to use it and get the largest good from it. It is the stage at which God's love and power becomes unquestionable realities in one's life. As theories they are only potential values, but as experiences they are real and undebatable ones from which we cannot escape and that change everything within and without.

The moment a thing becomes an experience life begins to take on a different nature and exert a different effect. Casual impressions of a thing may come and go, but an experience becomes a part of one's nature and personality. It is no longer a line in a book, a sentence in a speech, or an assumption in a mind. It has become a part of one's self, and no less real. It is this toward which all our teaching about God should tend.

The physician studies medicine or the lawyer studies law in order that he may lift it out of the books and put it into practice. That makes it an experience. We should do the same with God. We should study about Him to learn how to experience Him. Jesus experienced Him fully. That was what made Him the Christ.



Let all your thought about God as a fact point toward Him as Spirit, all your thought about Him as Spirit point to Him as a Person, all your thought about Him as a Person point to Him as an experience. The experience will soon demonstrate that He is a Father. You must, of course, do it yourself.

### REALLY DISCOVERING GOD

T H I S brings us to the climax of this whole matter of discovering the Soul of the Universe, which is God. We have found the recognition of Him in literature, traced the necessity for Him in nature, and discovered His pre-dominance in history as reflected in the Bible. We have seen the necessity of proceeding from these to the discovery of Him in experience as we do so many other necessary facts and forces.

Now we come to the matter of really experiencing Him in fact, of feeling and knowing Him definitely and consciously, of recognizing his presence as power as unmistakably as we see a garden, or the sunshine, or a rainbow. That is possible, and if you have not experienced it now is surely the time to begin trying. We shall here and now try to indicate at least one way it can be done, and show how to recognize the experience when it comes.

We have been referring to God as pure spirit. That, of course, is invisible so we do not expect to see God with our present limited powers of sight, though we are told the day will come when with new and better vision, we will see Him as He is. Till then we must be content to feel His presence.

In Jesus we see God not as He is but as He would be if He were a human being living in a body like our own. Jesus was called Immanu-el, meaning God with us. In His physical absence we may now think of the divine presence not only as with us, but in us. Within ourselves is where we must now meet, experience, know, and have companionship with God. That is where we are now recommending that you make your quest.

Have you at some time had the experience of feeling something sweep through you, for a moment completely flooding your consciousness with richness and joy? It was gone like a breath, but how wonderful it was while it lasted. That was a moment when the Divine Presence found the doors open and passed through. You can learn if you wish to, how to have the doors open more often.

You can sit down alone, relax, and consciously admit the Divine Power into your mind and body. When you can get into just the right attitude you will feel a gentle influence begin to spread through your being, a little like the power you feel when you take hold of the electrode of a battery, only gentler and more even. You feel possessed by it, and when you have gone again about the business of the day, you feel better.

If you have this experience repeatedly you may even find your health as well as your spirit strengthened and improved. You may not succeed every time,



for some unknown condition may stand in the way, but you can do it more and more successfully if you try.

That power you feel is everywhere. It spoke all created things into existence. It would enter our lives more often if our attitudes and conditions did not bar it. If, as time goes on, it enters your life more abundantly and lastingly, you may know that you have fellowship with God.

## CONSERVATION

T H E R E is one more suggestion to add. We have traced the knowledge of God up to its climax as a real personal experience, but having proceeded thus far do not lose the joyful blessing that so enriches and empowers your life. Do not mislay the sense of the Divine that you will always so greatly need in living the more abundant life. Conserve it and increase it by faithful practice and cultivation. If you do not use it you will lose it, and if you do not practice it regularly, you might as well never have had it.

We are creatures of habit, and we are as good or bad, as strong or weak, as wise or foolish, as the habits that govern us. A habit starts as a single act, then repetition fastens it on one. The way to make the presence and power of God in your life mean most to you and others through you is to make it a habit. Keep trying to experience it, and always try to live up to the possibilities it suggests. Do this till it becomes a natural part of your way of life.

This rainbow experience will come a little more easily and with a little greater power each time. Practice completely relaxed receptiveness with your mind on God and His will for your good. The experience will grow in significance, and each time you will be stronger in spirit. You will then know what the Disciples cultivated and used, and how the saints through the ages brought blessing to so many who were languishing without it.

Weeds come up of their own will, but flowers and grain require cultivation. The tares of waste and purposelessness will grow anywhere independently, but power for good in your own and other lives, the power of the Presence, requires effort, repetition, practice, and right use, always. The result is what Tennyson called "A light in this dark world to lighten it, a power in this dead world to make it live."

This only requires going about the processes of learning to know God in the same way we have to go about learning and practicing any other ability or skill. It is the way the mathematician learns to use his formulas, and the way the musician attains the mastery of the instruments, his fingers, and his coordinations. Remember that faithful repetition builds up your power, while even one omission weakens it more than you would ever think.

Notice the regularity with which Jesus withdrew to Olivet or elsewhere for



His devotions. What was He doing? Keeping up His practice in receiving and using the infinite power. With it He always went back to the multitude renewed. We have to keep our acquaintance with God fresh and vigorous too. Thus we come to know the Soul of the Universe, and then we can relate things to Him as spokes radiate from the center of a wheel. This will turn the light on in your life, and in that light there will be warmth and power.

And now, with these thoughts in mind, let us solemnly repeat the words of the Meditation together:

MEDITATION
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I open my life to the Divine Presence, and as my Guest enters I find newness of spirit, upsurging strength, and victorious faith, activating my life.

May God bless your resolution to build your life with the "Soul of the Universe" as your architect.

YOUR CLASS INSTRUCTOR.

Your next lesson is one of great richness. Its title is RELATE YOURSELF TO THE UNIVERSAL HARMONY. This preparation means much to you, - be ready to receive it.

